

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The National Park Service this month will celebrate National Park Week, during which entrance fees will be waived at the nation's 392 national parks. National Park Week this year runs from April 17 to April 25.

"This is a great chance for families across the Central Coast to take advantage of our beautiful National Park system," said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel). "Whether you take a long drive to Yosemite National Park or a short daytrip to the Pinnacles National Monument closer to home, families will have the opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful lands our country has to offer."

While the fee waiver only applies to entrance fees, the Park Service reports that it will offer discounts on tours, lodging and souvenirs.

"We are rolling out the red carpet and inviting everyone to visit a national park and help celebrate National Park Week," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "Parks are fun and affordable destinations and great places to engage in healthy, outdoor activities, whether for a few hours or a few days."

This program follows on the heels of last year's fee-waiver initiative, when the Park Service waived fees for three summer weekends to help families struggling through tough economic

times.

"National parks preserve our heritage, promote recreational experiences, and provide places of quiet refuge," said National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis. "Most people live within a short drive of a national park so I encourage everyone to spend some time enjoying America's Great Outdoors during National Park Week."

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